

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence School Committee

East Providence City Hall - Council Chamber

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

January 14, 2014

Open Session

Mr. Monteiro called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. Members Present: Elizabeth Clupny, Timothy Conley, Anthony Ferreira, Richard Pimentel, Joel Monteiro. Also present: Kim Mercer, Superintendent of Schools, Robert Silva, Esq.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence were observed.

Student/Staff Recognition ¡V Assistant Superintendent, Julie Motta, thanked Laura Marshall from Silver Spring School, Linda Murphy from Oldham School and Aimee Couto from Whiteknact School for hosting Eureka Math Family Nights.

Mr. Frank Devall, Principal of Martin Middle School attended with music instructors and students who were presented with certificates of recognition for being selected to the RI Music Educators

Association All State Band and Chorus.

Student Liaison Report ¡V Joshua Conception presented a report on high school activities and events.

Public Comment I ¡V Agenda Items ¡V None

Superintendent's Report

Facilities Update ¡V Mr. Ed Catelli thanked his staff for working diligently over the past week, dealing with multiple maintenance issues in our buildings. Starting punch list; crews at Waddington now; will continue next several weeks during evenings, weekends and holiday to complete punch list items. Mr. Monteiro commented that the School Committee would like a walk-through of buildings before the contractors leave. Mr. Catelli will schedule a walk through for an evening meeting early next week; public will be invited; January 22, 2014 tentative date. Mr. Monteiro echoed the comments of Mr. Catelli on work being done in our schools; appreciates that. Mr. Catelli noted there are on-going issues over 25 years which reflect on maintenance; 60 year old heaters at the high school; he appreciates the efforts of School Committee members for their support (Tony & Joel); other schools had closings, we have antiquated buildings; bring it to the City Council to get money for buildings; roof issues; Whiteknactneeds to be replaced this summer; has been going on for ten years; need to step forward and take care of these issues; i.e. High School windows, heat, thermostats, etc.

Facilities have not had any money allocated over the years. This is the first time money in the budget; thanks to Supt. Mercer; realistic goals for the schools; lot of work to be done; need HVAC, roofs for students and staff; not hiding it; everyone knows it; put money in the capital account to take care of our facilities.

Mr. Ferreira thanked Mr. Catelli for talking about the high school heating problems; room by room done; need money; 100% team effort; let public know; team effort; staff did great job; Ed Catelli hopes staff and supplies to take care of problems. School Committee members were on site and observed problems first hand.

Mr. Conley asked that information regarding the high school walk-through be communicated to the public through our website.

Personnel Report on Resignation/Leaves of Absence/Retirement

RETIREMENT

Maureen Nolan-Grade 5 Teacher-Kent Heights -Effective End of 2013/2014 School Year

Marianne Scanlon-Grade 1 Teacher-Kent Heights-Effective End of 2013/2014 School Year

Eileen McGowan-Grade 5 Teacher-Kent Heights-Effective End of 2013/2014 School Year

Karen Conte-Special Education Teacher-Kent Heights-Effective End of 2013/2014 School Year

Terry Allard-Special Education Teacher-Early Learning Center at

Waddington-Effective End of 2013/2014 School Year

RESIGNATION

**Klara Benzigerne Gendur-Supervisory Assistant-Hennessey-Effective
01/10/2014**

FMLA

**Ashley Murphy -Pre-K Teacher-Early Learning Center-Effective
Approximately 02/24/14-03/14/2014**

Consent Agenda

**Approval of Minutes ¡V Motion by Mr. Conley to approve the minutes
of the meeting held on November 12, 2013, seconded by Mr. Ferreira.
Motion by Ms. Clupny to table the minutes of the December 10, 2013
meeting, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.**

**Finance Report ¡V Kim Mercer reported Summary of Revenues of
\$11,756,903 and Expenditures of \$9,100,130 for the period
11/1/13-12/31/13. Motion by Ms. Clupny to accept financial report,
seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.**

Action Items

**Odeh Engineers ¡V Pool Restoration ¡V Kim Mercer, Superintendent,
reported that the pool has been closed; what is needed to open it is a
structural analysis by an engineer; scope of services to conduct
structural engineering report. Mr. Conley ¡V if we spend money will
the Building Inspector be more favorable to reopening. Supt.
Responded yes; Mr. Conley asked how we would be able to pay for**

this; heating problems in our buildings; if \$45,000 would be in favor of hiring consultant for the high school; he thinks this is questionable. Ms. Clupny agreed that we could do a lot of things with \$45,000. Mr. Conley though Envious Swimming wanted to go half and half; this way we are assuming all the risk; they will run it; we cannot finance 100%; we need their assistance with this. Mr. Ferreira stated that we have to get pool back on line; best/worst case scenario is we need to look at spending \$45,000 and get another bill (low estimate \$150,000); not willing to spend \$45,000 knowing we do not have the money to repair the pool. Mr. Conley voted to table this issue until conversation with Envious Swimming about being a financial partner in this study, seconded by Ms. Clupny. Vote 5-0.

Personnel Appointments

APPOINTMENTS

Tara Mollo-Reading- Specialist-Whiteknact-Effective 01/15/2014

**Robert Duarte-Middle School Athletic Coordinator-Effective 2013/2014
School Year**

**Nadelyne Leger -Teacher Assistant-Rhode School for the
Deaf-Effective 1/15/2014**

Micaela Folan-ESL Teacher-ORLO-Effective 01/21/2014

**Bethany Thayer* Special Education Teacher-ORLO-Effective
01/15/2014**

Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0

(Discussion: Coordinator to attend events; why in collective bargaining agreement; we are five months in to middle school sports; Mr. Conley would like this rolled into Athletic Director duties; why post a position no one applies for it; does not make any sense; do we really need it. Ms. Mercer iV consider schedule, work load etc.

Awarding of Bids iV Superintendent requested approval of the following bid awards:

Skyward iV New Student Management System for EP schools; will bring different data bases into one place; other RI districts have purchased this system; if student transfers fro/to another district, we can move the registration without re-registering the student. Parents can access information; very comprehensive system; we will not have to purchase other programs; we now have Tienet, PowerSchool; test scores and other information will be in one place. Julie Motta added that RIDE reports, etc. can be extracted on a daily basis; parents will be able to get assignments. Ms. Mercer added that nurses information will also be housed there. Mr. Monteiro asked if we have to apply for licenses for all, so the expense will not be that much more. This will be implemented over the summer. Motion By Ms. Clupny to approve, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0.

Ambient Sound System for the Career/Technical School iV Superintendent requested bid be awarded. (Mr. Ferreira noted this is through a federal grant) Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

W.B. Mason v Auditorium Seating at CTC v Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0. (Discussion Mr. Catelli advised part of state bid; good company to work with; they replace items and we do not pay until we are satisfied with the product)

Datco - Activity Bus v CTC v Superintendent recommended the bid award; CTC is in need of a bus which can hold 20 students and equipment to be able to travel to construction sites. Mr. Catelli added that the bus from Datco is galvanized steel; the other bidder offered a fiberglass bus. Mr. Conley questioned why take a bid that did not meet the bid requirements; the one recommended is the only one that met the bid specs. Jerry Leach, City Purchasing Agent stated that all the bidders received the same specifications; Anderson offered a 16 passenger bus and was disqualified. The only addition was racks to hold construction gear and it is up to the bidder to read the specs and submit a bid; Anderson was at the bid opening. Karen Mellen, CTC Director, confirmed that the bus needed to accommodate 20 students.

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Roll call vote: Mr. Conley, aye; Ms. Clupny, aye; Mr. Ferreira, aye; Mr. Pimentel, nay; Mr. Monteiro, aye. Vote 4-1 to approve bid award. Discussion -

High School Clubs v Superintendent Mercer received a request from a student proposing a new club at the high school: the Rotary Youth Leader Club v "Interact" which works closely with local Rotary Clubs

on community service and fundraising projects. Mr. Higginbotham has agreed to be the advisor for the club. The Principal is aware of this request and approves. Motion by Mr. Conley to approve the formation of this club, seconded by Ms. Clupny. Vote 5-0.

Superintendent Mercer advised that another request was received from a student to create an Art Club for high school students; Principal is aware of the request and approves. Motion to approve by Mr. Conley, seconded by Ms. Clupny. Vote 5-0.

Contracts

Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve contacts for the Security and Energy Manager and the Night Supervisor, seconded by Mr. Pimentel.

Vote 4-1. Mr. Conley voted nay; not in favor of employment contracts; his opinion does not reflect on the individual employees.

Kim Mercer met with representatives of the Competitive Cheerleaders Groups at Martin & Riverside Middle School and is bringing the matter before the School Committee to approve of the group so insurance will cover their activities; they would like to be sanctioned by the School Department; coaches have to be certified and approved by the Athletic Director. Mr. Conley asked to reaffirm that the RI Interlocal Trust will cover this request. Mr. Monteiro stated that the

advice that he received from the Trust indicated that both parties were at risk; if sanctioned by the School Department they would be able to cover that group. Motion by Mr. Conley to approve the request, seconded by Ms. Clupny. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Ferreira stated that he had received calls about this; situations regarding volunteers should be handled more pleasantly; four to five years incident free; citizens of the city volunteer their time. Mr. Monteiro stated that an email was sent; once realized no coverage, the activity was stopped; School Committee looked into it to get answers to members of the community; if residents have questions, they should feel free to call or email School Committee members.

Requisitions ¡V Bill List

Warrant

1350	12/17/13	\$	207.53
1351	12/19/13	\$	20,473.37
1352	12/23/13	\$	219.99
1353	1/2/14	\$	710,608.47
1354	1/10/14	\$	89,661.97
1355	1/10/14	\$	1,399,436.02

Motion to approve by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Amended Policies ¡V First Passage; Superintendent reviewed the

policies individually and recommended first passage of the following:

II.A.2. Superintendent's Annual Report

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

II.A.4. Social Events Calendar

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

II.D.1. Naming New Facilities

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

II.D.2. Guidelines for the Use of Elementary Schools- Use of Elementary Schools (Title change)

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

II.D.3. Inspection Tours

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

II.D.6. Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Tools for Schools- No Change

Discussion: Mr. Ferreira asked when the School Committee would receive copies of the reports from the schools; Superintendent stated that this was done in the fall facilities report; another will be done in the spring; also Superintendent will report out on it. The Superintendent responded that reports are on file; she went on a tour of all the buildings with the Facilities Manager, police, fire, etc.

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

II.D.7. Energy Star Policy - no change

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

II.F.1. Fire Safety Drills (policy not needed ;V law sufficient)

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

II.F.2. Emergency Communication to the School Committee

Motion by Mr. Conley, seconded by Ms. Clupny. Vote 5-0.

II.H.1. Integrated Pest Management Policy;V no change

Motion by Mr. Conley, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

II.I.1. Advertising on School Property - recommendation to delete; case by case basis is a better option rather than a policy.

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0.

II.F.4. Crisis Response

Superintendent recommended approval ;V forms and procedures added

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

V.A.11. Transportation Policy amended

Motion by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Ferreira Vote 5-0.

Discussion regarding Early Admission to Kindergarten;

Superintendent Mercer recommended that we follow RI General Law

or identify another cut-off date since there are too many exceptions in the current policy; using assessments is unreliable; School Department needs to identify an enrollment age and stick to it. School Committee members had concerns about students who are just a few days in range of the cut-off who would be excluded for an extra year. The Superintendent stated that no matter what date, there will always will be people on both sides; we do not have the means or personnel to do testing for early admission; current policy trial; not good predictors; would be asking School Department to set up testing; School Committee has to make a decision on the date since we will be registering students in February for next year; Ms. Clupny agreed with setting a date;. The Superintendent stated that students are most successful at that age; Mr. Monteiro asked how many early admissions have we received in prior years. Assistant Superintendent, Julie Motta, added there is not a professional screener in place; this can be revisited; RIDE will be coming up with one; she had concerns about using “professional judgment” as criteria for early admission.

School Committee discussed using the professional opinion of teachers if only a few students involved and agreed that a cut-off date is needed but with leeway.

Mr. Conley said that he understood the sentiments of not turning kids away, but agrees with the Assistant Superintendent that there is no recognized evaluation to make the determination about if the child is ready; subjective measurement would be used and putting this on

staff members is dangerous. Mr. Ferreira agreed that a firm date is needed, but with a window. Ms. Clupny did not agree with putting this on teachers; an assessment will be available in the future from RIDE. Mr. Monteiro's opinion was that teachers make subjective judgments all the time with grading; they are capable of doing it; he agrees with a date but does not buy into teachers not being capable. Motion by Ms. Clupny to accept first passage of amended policy, seconded by Mr. Conley.

Vote 5-0.

PTA Reports

Jessica Beauchaine reported that Robotics Teams at both schools did a terrific job at recent competition. PTSA Scholarships available for college. She was on State PTA which has a "Reflections Program" for art and visual arts and she wanted to make all aware of it; she was grateful that the High School now has an Art Club. She asked if the Oldham playground equipment at the MeadowCrest building; is being planned for use at Waddington.

Mr. Ferreira would like a date by the next meeting when this will be done. Mr. Catelli, Facilities Director, reported that we are still waiting for legal paperwork so we can get the equipment; we cannot go on private property to get it without permission.

Public Comment II Non Agenda Items

Mary Teixeira, teacher at Silver Spring, agreed that assessment of Kindergarten students cannot be placed on teachers and that it should be done by the school district with a cut-off date with exceptions to be determined. Teachers have to be objective; every kid has a chance to grow; after spending a year of watching a child, then the teacher can evaluate a child. The Kindergarten policy has to come from the district with criteria to meet it or not or would have to come up with an assessment; teachers have to be there for all children.

Chrissy Rossi, City Council liaison, commented regarding:

„X High School accreditation (NEAS) letter requested that a i§Special Progress Report should provide the schooli’s formal plan, timeline and approved allocation of funding to fully resolve the significant number of remaining identified facility issues which have been estimated by the school system to cost over \$10 million dollarsi” and since they are expecting this in May, she suggested School Committee and Superintendent should be placed on that agenda to discuss it. School Committee agreed to attend.

„X Advertising policy in existence; she requested that the policy not be eliminated; without a policy, the School Committee would deciding weekly or monthly about who can advertise. Also pointed out that Feinstein signage on our school buildings are considered to be advertising

„X School Inspections iV School Committee has the right to enter the schools

„X January 21st Planning Department representatives will be there; will reach out to businesses in the area; Mr. Briden also working on developing this

„X Early Childhood ;VRepresentatives Melo and Amore working on legislation; not sure about money; this will get kids into school early; get teachers to weigh in

„X Inquired about Oldham 12 acres could be set up

„X Asked about status of the Chemistry Lab; Superintendent stated that work is taking place slower than she would have liked; will be discussion at Facilities meeting tomorrow.

Mr. Ferreira commented that the room has been gutted for three months and we do not have answers; he asked why not a date.

Ms. Rossi requested a list of the work to satisfy NEASC's request in anticipation of discussion about the ten million dollars needed for the work which is due to years of neglect and she is 100% behind the effort; we have to look at how much it will cost and how to fund through a bond, supplemental tax, or some other method. She would like a definitive answer on it. Ms. Mercer stated that she is waiting for a report from the Fire Department which is almost completed so that the Stage II assessment can be completed.

Mr. Conley noted that we will need current costs as part of the analysis

Fred Rybka asked if items are pulled off the list of things to do; does

the contract have any dates? The Chemistry Lab was added to the contract.

Mr. Monteiro stated that changes not anticipated; next meeting will get details; cabinets delayed; he was not happy about the delays either but the science lab was not in the original contract; discussion about chemistry labs. Mr. Conley was also disappointed with the time but in all fairness to the contractor, there were many issues with this: mercury spill in drain, limited access, project added on; ability to order parts late; materials requested specified special orders that take time; this is a high priority; and the School Committee is committed to completion.

Mr. Rybka asked about steam traps in maintenance program; Mr. Catelli stated that we never had one; over the summer will oil, grease, etc. now that we have an HVAC person on staff. Mr. Ferreira stated that steam traps are on the list; he requested a report on it; how many blowers, motors, etc. and a dollar amount attached to it. He felt that the chemistry labs should never have been started until a list of items was completed with dollar amounts next to it; he wants information in writing when the classroom will be done; when were cabs ordered, missing links? We owe it to the kids and taxpayers.

Izilda Neves ¡V Orlo PTA ¡V agreed that Kindergarten policy should set a date and then stay with it; she commented about a holiday policy change; some schools had holiday celebrations and some did

not.

(Superintendent noted that the policy was that everyone should be respectful of all holidays.)

Ms. Teves asked about the Tools for Schools Policy; Orlo air quality policy; how often; how is committee set up and by who? Mr. Catelli responded that a representative of the Department of Health will speak to principals at their next meeting about it and that any questions should be referred to him. Mr. Monteiro asked that someone respond to Ms. Neves about what the plan will be. Mr. Ferreira requests copies of the reports from the schools from last year.

Mary Nascimento, parent question the holiday policy and commented that all the schools had different holiday activities. Superintendent advised that schools received guidelines on holiday activities which advised about being respectful of other people's religious beliefs.

Announcements

Mr. Conley thanked Project 106 and Representative Joy Hearn for \$5,000 grant for middle school sports.

Kindergarten Registration - February 3 - 7

Parent Math Night - Waddington - January 27

Parent Math Night - Kent Heights - February 27

District Wide Title 1 Parent Night - City Hall - January 28

Achieve 3000 Parent Event - City Hall - January 16

Motion by Ms. Clupny that the Committee convene in Executive Session for purposes of discussing:

Personnel ;V R.I. Gen. Laws ;±42-46-5(a) (1); Collective Bargaining R.I. Gen. Laws ;±42-46-5(a) (2); Litigation/Pending Litigation-R.I. Gen. Laws ;±42-46-5(a) (2), seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to return to Public Session, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0.

Report Executive Session Votes ;V No Votes Taken.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Elizabeth Clupny, Clerk of the Committee